CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

"HOW BEAUTIFUL UPON THE MOUNTAINS, ARE THE FEET OF HIM THAT BRINGETH GOOD TIDINGS, THAT PUBLISHETH PEACE."—Isa. lii, 7.

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SELECTED SERMON.

By Br. Hosea Ballou, 2nd.

(*Concluded from p.* 74.)

"*And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed.*" Gal. iii, 8.

Time will not allow us to proceed in our quotations from the prophets. St. Peter, in the 3d chapter of Acts, alludes to a fact, that will give us some idea of the extent to which we might pursue such extracts. He says, that the heavens must receive Jesus, "until the times of the restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets, since the world began." But in the limits of a single sermon, we must leave many of those gracious testimonies unnoticed.

When we come to the New Testament, we find the same gospel faithfully maintained.—Christ himself declared, in the 12th chapter of John, that 'if he were lifted up from the earth, he would draw all men unto him.' You recollect, too, that the common titles he wore, were such as these, 'The Savior of the *world*,' not of a part; 'The Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the *world*;' 'The Light of the *world*;' 'The bread which came down from heaven for the life of the *world*;' terms, all denoting the universality of his spiritual blessings, and agreeing with the declaration of the angel, that his gospel should be great joy to all people.

In the 5th chapter of Romans, the apostle Paul says, "As by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so, by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." What could be more direct and conclusive? But he proceeds: "for as by one man's disobedience, many were made sinners, so, by the obedience of one, shall many be made righteous. Moreover, the law entered that the offence might abound; but where sin abounded, grace did much more abound; that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign, through righteousness, unto eternal life." Here we behold grace abounding wherever sin hath abounded, and reigning unto eternal life, wherever sin hath reigned unto death. Recollect also what St. Paul says, in the 11th chapter of Romans, after he had shown that the purpose of God in blinding the Jews, was to extend salvation to the Gentiles: "I would not brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery," says he, "lest ye should be wise in your own conceits, that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in, and so all Israel shall be saved." No one, who is in the least acquainted with the meaning of terms, needs to be informed that there cannot be a more certain phrase to designate all mankind, than this, 'the fulness of the Gentiles, and all Israel.' These shall be brought in, and saved. And the apostle sums up the whole subject, in the end of the same chapter, by saying, "God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all. O, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed to him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things; to whom be glory forever."

The 15th chapter of 1st Corinthians, speaks of the restitution of all things: "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order; Christ the first fruits; afterward, they that are Christ's at his coming; then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power. For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed, is death;" or rather, as it should have been translated, "Death, the last enemy, shall be destroyed; For, He hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith, All things are put under him, it is manifest that He is excepted which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him; that God may be all in all." Nothing can be more sublime than the thought that God shall be "all in all." That his Spirit shall be the only living principle in the Universe, filling all beings, prompting every impulse that is felt, and inspiring every thought that is conceived. In the first chapter of Ephesians, the apostle speaks of the same glorious consummation: "God hath abounded towards us in all wisdom and prudence; having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure, which he had purposed in himself; that in the dispensation of the fulness of times, he might gather together in one, all things, in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him." Do we wish to know what is intended by *being in Christ?* The same apostle informs us, that it is becoming new creatures.

To the Colossians he says, "It pleased the Father that in him [Christ] should all fullness dwell; and, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth or things in heaven." And suffer me here to remind you, that the same apostle tells the Corinthians that this very doctrine of the reconciliation of the world, is the gospel, or ministry of reconciliation. He says that God gave to him "the ministry of reconciliation, to wit, that God was in Christ reconciling *the world* unto himself, not imputing to them their trespasses." In the 2d chapter of Philippians we read, "God hath highly exalted him, [Christ] and given him a name which is above every name; that in the name of Jesus, every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Will any say, that some may be compelled to acknowledge Christ Lord, from no holy motive? Remember that the same apostle declares, "No man can call Christ Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." 'Every tongue shall confess that Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father!' And let us be willing that the Creator should receive this glory from the souls he has made. Let the tremendous, yet joyful vision, which John beheld from Patmos, be realized, and every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea and all that are in them, ascribe blessing and honor and glory and power, unto him that sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb forever and ever.

These passages, my respected hearers, are sufficient to satisfy us what the common doctrine of the scriptures is on this subject. How people, who read the scriptures, can be so inattentive as to overlook the host of witnesses to the gospel preached to Abraham, is unaccountable. And yet, it is quite a common saying, that the salvation of all men is a doctrine, reasonable enough indeed, but destitute of any authority from the sacred volume! The truth is, that the whole plan of salvation, as far as it has been revealed, is briefly this: That God would have all men to be saved, and therefore sent the Son to be the Savior of the world; and that the Son came to save the world, to reconcile all to God, and therefore tasted death for all; and finally, that he shall accomplish the work he came to do. Look through the scriptures, and you will find it difficult to determine which of the two particulars in this statement, is the more plainly taught, God's design to save all, or their actual salvation. I ought to remind you also, that this system is one that is complete in itself. Take away any part from it, and you render the whole deformed and incomplete, like the house of the foolish man, that was begun, but could not be finished. You leave a vast foundation, laid with immense expense, which after all is unimproved and useless! Such is not the work of God.

Against this gospel, what are the chief objections? As to that common one, that the words *everlasting*, *forever*, and *forever and ever*, are applied to misery, we shall pay but little attention to it; for there is not a man, woman or child in this assembly, who reads the scriptures to any profit, but knows that these expressions, in themselves, are no proof of endless duration, because they are applied to things that have already come to an end. If you will take your bibles and read carefully, you will perceive these words applied to the rituals of the ceremonial law, to the Jewish possession of the land of Canaan, to the mountains—in one word, to such things as all denominations believe to be temporal, *more than seventy times;* and but about *a dozen times* to the idea of suffering, in all the bible. With this fact before him, no honest man will ever again urge the force of those indefinite words, against the gospel preached to Abraham, and spoken by all God's holy prophets since the world began.

I should not have mentioned this objection here, but for the unaccountable conduct of many of our ministering brethren. Do they not frequently endeavor to impose on their weaker hearers, by the mere sound of these words? Will they not even go so far as to declare them sufficient proof of endless duration? When they stand up in their desks, and warn their people against the doctrine of the final restitution of all things, what are the arguments they bring forward? Why, that we read of *everlasting punishment;* of *the smoke of torment ascending up forever and ever*, &c. Now, they have been often reminded how those words are used; they have had shown to them, the very passages in which they are applied to things which they themselves believe only temporal: in short, they are as well

acquainted with the fact, that they are not confined to subjects that are endless, as you are; and why will they continue to hold them up in this manner? Is endless misery so sweet a hope, that it must be supported and nourished, even at the expense of truth and honor?

I am aware that there is one objection, similar to that which we have just attended to, which, at first sight, appears more plausible. It is said, that when Christ declared, in the parable of the sheep and goats, that the accursed should go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal, he applied this same word, *everlasting*, in the original, both to the happiness of one class, and to the punishment of the other; and that the passage ought to have been translated, "these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into *everlasting* life." All this is true. "Well then," it will be demanded, "does not this fact prove that the punishment is, at least, as lasting as the life of the righteous?" No, it does not prove it; for this is not the only passage where we find everlasting used twice in one sentence; first in a limited, and then in the unlimited sense. See for example, the third chapter of Habakkuk, where we read that God "stood and measured the earth; he beheld and drove asunder the nations; the *everlasting mountains* were scattered, the perpetual hills did bow; *his ways are everlasting*." Who would think to prove, from this passage, that the mountains shall stand as long as God's ways exist, merely because *everlasting* is applied to both in the same sentence? And who now will think to prove, from the other passage, that punishment shall continue as long as the life of the righteous remains, merely because *everlasting* is applied to both in the same sentence?

These objections, which have made so much noise in the world, vanish the moment they are examined. You see, they do not, in any manner, affect the gospel which the scriptures preach.

But some will say, "hitherto we have heard nothing but the gospel. We admit that if we consider the gospel *alone*, it promises blessings to all men, as has been shown; but let not the preacher forget that the subject has a contrast —a *law*, as well as a gospel. If he will now bring forward the law, he will discover that it circumscribes the gospel, and confines it to narrower limits." My respected hearers, the law is not opposed to the gospel. Look to the 21st verse of the chapter from which our text is taken, and you will see that St. Paul asks this question; "Is the law then against the promises of God?" and exclaims, in answer, "God forbid!" Yes, we are ready to preach to you the law—the whole law; but God forbid that we should misrepresent and pervert it, so as to make it contradict the promises. This would destroy all the harmony of the scriptures, and render them divided against themselves. It would make them say and unsay; affirm and deny; declare that all men should be, and then that they should not be blessed in Christ. My friends, you perceive, that according to St. Paul's declaration, there cannot be a single passage of the law, that ought to be explained in opposition to the gospel. Even supposing we could not satisfy ourselves what is the precise meaning of every expression, yet we know what it is not—it is not against the promises. In the 17th verse of the third chapter of Galatians, the apostle has marked out the bounds of the law so plainly, that no one can mistake them: "Now this I say," saith he, "that the covenant which was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect." How strange it is, that religious people could ever have indulged the thought that God, in giving the law, intended to annul the covenant which he had made four hundred and thirty years before with Abraham —that he intended to make void the promise which he had confirmed by an oath, that all the nations and families of the earth should be blessed in Christ! Whatever the gospel promised to the fathers, whatever it has promised in succeeding ages, by the mouth of God's holy prophets, or by his Son, or his apostles, all shall be fulfilled; for God hath spoken it, and shall he not do it?

My friends, we have now ascertained what the gospel is, which the scriptures teach and support. We have seen too, how weak and false are the objections that are usually urged against it.

Why should we still oppose it? It is as plainly written on the tablets of our hearts, by the finger of God, as it is on the page of inspiration. It is the spirit of this gospel, and of this alone, which reigns, the same, in the hearts of all christians. No matter what their creeds are, the moment they are brought into the liberty of the sons of God, their love and desires extend impartially to the whole human race. I appeal to all my christian brethren, I care not what your denomination may be—is it not so? Even now, when you approach the throne of divine grace, does not one great prayer swallow up every inferior petition—the prayer for the salvation of all? At your firesides, or amidst the concerns of life, if but one thought of the consolations of the gospel, or of the glorious fulness of your Savior, come across your mind, do not these strong, these unbounded desires spring up within you, beseeching God to restore every soul to holiness and happiness? Whence comes this spirit? Is it the spirit of Truth, or of the Devil? Would to heaven, the poor, doubting saint would doubt no longer—could firmly believe what his God, who never deceives, is thus constantly teaching him by his spirit.

For myself, I cannot conceive how we can have a disposition to oppose it; for it is certainly the only gospel that can satisfy—do not, for Christ's sake, say the carnal heart—which can satisfy any christian under heaven. When you hear a different gospel, one that assures you that but a small part of mankind will finally be saved, can you say, *I am satisfied! It is enough!* No, no; the thought of the endless exclusion of your fellow sinners from God and heaven, comes across you like the pangs we feel over a dying brother. You turn, and plead for the salvation of all; but your inexorable creed says, No. How can I describe these feelings? How shall I express this dreadful anguish of the good, but mistaken man? An eminent and pious divine, a believer in endless misery, once concluded a sermon on that doctrine, by saying, "I sink, I sink, under the awful weight of my subject! and I declare, when I see my friends, my relations, the people of my charge, this whole congregation; when I think that I, that you, that we are all threatened with these torments—I find in the thought a mortal poison, which diffuseth itself into every period of my life, rendering society tiresome, nourishment insipid, pleasure disgustful, and life itself a cruel bitter."* But good God! are these the boasted joys of the true gospel of Jesus Christ? Is the tenderest mercy, that Heaven has ever manifested to the world, so cruel as this?

My friends, is not this gospel too, the only one which our Maker has constituted our very natures capable of enduring? The whole human family is connected; we are all brethren. We have all the same Father, for one God hath created us. Strike but one member of this great family, and the unalterable law of our nature is such, that many others must feel the blow. Assign one individual to endless torment, and you will quickly behold some heart-broken father, or mother, or brother, or sister, or some other dear friend, whose peace you have blasted forever. We ourselves all have our circles of relatives and friends, whom we love, and to whom God has bound our hearts. Bring us now any other gospel, convince us that even one out of these dear circles, is probably hastening to an eternity of anguish, and we ourselves are but miserable wretches for life, even though our own salvation were insured. Fathers and mothers, look on your families, and select the dreadful victim; young men and maidens, look around on the lovely circle of your youthful companions, and while your hearts glow, and your countenances beam with one common transport, prepare to resign them over to immortal pain; ye aged, trembling and decrepid, come, and tell us which of those who have supported you in your helplessness, shall lull you to repose, in the vales of heaven, by their unceasing groans and cries of despair; neighbors, who have lived together in mutual satisfaction, for ten, twenty, or thirty years, and visited each others' houses in many an hour of joy, and in seasons of distress—ye, who have mingled tears together, say, how would you feel in the prospect of an eternal separation?

But why should I longer withhold the affecting truth? O, my friends, we ourselves are all mourners! Our friends sleep under the clods of the valley. Our fathers, and mothers, alas, where are they? Our brothers and sisters, too, our companions, and some of our dear children, we shall behold on earth no more; and where are they? Oh, is it for such as we, to despise the only gospel which brings us an assurance of meeting them all again—of meeting them in a happier world?

My brethren, this gospel is like the rain-bow that was set in the retiring clouds after the flood: it extends across all the storms of human affliction, and is a sure pledge of fairer and brighter scenes to come. May all flesh behold it together, and all hearts rejoice in the salvation of the Lord. Amen.

*Saurin.

FROM THE CHRISTIAN SECRETARY.

WHO OPPOSE PROTRACTED MEETINGS?

As the protracted meetings which are held all over the United States, are, by the blessing of God, productive of so much good, it would seem as though there could be nothing human, nothing fallen and sinful, that needs salvation by grace, that could really feel disposed to utter a syllable against them. But alas! there are those, and those too, who call themselves christians, "who lightly speak evil" of this subject.

Now it appears to me that the disposition manifested by various classes of individuals with regard to these meetings, will furnish something of a *Shibboleth*, whether they hate the truth and despise religion or not. Allow me to state a few facts.

A much esteemed clergyman of my acquaintance, of another denomination, a few days since, while attending a protracted meeting, found a number of his ministering brethren present disposed to speak lightly of these meetings, and expressed their disapprobation in sundry remarks. At length he said, "Brethren, there is a certain class of men that agree with you exactly, and I must inform you who they are. As I was coming to this place, I stopped at a tavern to dine; and among a large collection of noisy men around the door, was one with a straw hat on, the brim torn off about half around, and then sewed on to the top of the crown. In reply to some of his company, who inquired where he found his new fashioned hat, he said, "*I got it at a four days' meeting.*" Then after a loud laugh, amidst the fumes and belchings of intoxicating liquor, he and his coadjutors had each to throw out some

wicked remarks against the four days' meetings, as they termed them.

"Now, brethren," added the clergyman, "you see who they are that oppose protracted meetings, and if you oppose them, you know your company."

The writer of this article a few hours since fell in company with one of the most profane and hard drinking men in the county, and he said to me, "Well, I understand there is to be a 5 or 6 days' meeting in this town this week; but I have no opinion at all of such meetings;" and then added, "*I am a Universalist.*" This was perfectly in character. This same individual, when once reproved for profane swearing, replied, "O, I'm a Universalist." What a fine commentary upon the sentiment!

Not long since I went to visit a poor sick woman, who was under some distress of mind for her sins. I endeavored to explain to her the plan of salvation by Jesus Christ, and that she must experience a change of heart, or she would be lost forever. The husband, who is grossly intemperate, immediately said in a high tone of voice, "You must stop that subject, sir; I will not allow any talking upon religion to my family when they are sick; it is taking an advantage of them;" and instantly turned to railing at four days' meetings—the loss of time to the attendants—how much money might be earned by them—"calling the wages of the men," said he, "twelve and a half cents a day, and the women 6, would raise money enough to pay off all our town and state taxes," &c. (See Mark xiv, 5, and John xii, 5.) When he stopped to breathe, his wife implored him with tears to allow me to pray with her. O, he did not wish to hear prayer, he believed God was a merciful being, &c. &c. but as she continued to entreat him with such earnest supplications, he at length consented, and I prayed.

These are a few among the multitudes who oppose protracted meetings. And now I would ask all opposers, the same questions which are said to have been proposed to a Universalist preacher in a neighboring town. He made an attack upon a colored preacher, (Haynes) and challenged a public dispute. The latter not having sufficient time to spare, proposed that each party should ask the other three questions, and that the other should answer them. When this plan was mutually agreed upon, it fell to the colored man to propose the three first; and said he, "*Do you pray in your family?*" "That is not to the subject," said the Universalist. "Yes, that is my first question," replied H., "and you must answer it." "Well then," said the Universalist, "I answer *No.*" Second question, "*Do you pray in secret?*" He answered *No.* Third question, "*Do you not swear sometimes?*" Answer, *Yes.* The Universalist was so disappointed in the questions and his necessary answers, that he would proceed no farther.

If these same questions were put to the opposers of protracted meetings, would not the answers be almost without exception, the same? Let conscience answer, and the character will be easily ascertained. AMICUS.

FOR THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

Messrs. Editors—It is very natural for persons who have taken up their residence in a distant neighborhood from that of their nativity, to reflect on the variety of circumstances through which they have passed, and the many happy hours spent in the society of friends. With me, the trifling incidents attendant on boyhood, are frequently brought fresh to recollection, and at times, I almost fancy myself seated by my father's fire-side, receiving his wholesome instruction, while I can see the intense anxiety of my mother for my future welfare, plainly depicted in her countenance. Indeed, no recollections through life, are probably stronger, or more peculiarly grateful to us, than those connected with the "home of our youth."

Born and educated in the town of Southold, (L. I.) I cannot but sensibly feel all, and much more than I have above expressed. It was there I received my first impressions. It was there I whiled away many a happy hour. It was there I left my relatives and friends. I therefore crave your indulgence, while I make a few remarks in relation to that people, to whom I feel bound by ties of consanguinity and friendship. Perhaps as a body of people, there is not a place in this country where they are more scrupulously honest; and for hospitality, none I think, can excel them. In this particular, I think I speak that I know, and am happy to testify to what I have seen. True, my acquaintance with the world is comparatively small, but sufficient to justify the above remarks.—There are but few prevailing vices, tending much to disturb the harmony of the neighborhood, but like all others, it is not wholly exempt from individuals whose morals are to be deplored. In the cause of virtue and religion, they may be said to be truly zealous. The principal religious sects are Presbyterians, Methodists and Universalists, all of whom have stated worship on Sundays. Among the two former sects, I can recognize many respectable and good disposed persons; and while I take the liberty to dissent from them in matters of belief, I hold them in grateful remembrance and respect.—When I resided among them, good old Calvinism was the theme of the Presbyterian Clergy. Recently I am informed they have taken, what may not be inaptly termed, a *spiritual somerset;* for in those very pulpits where once Orthodoxy, pure as when it dropped from the lips of John Calvin, was weekly dispensed to the people, Arminianism, of the rankest order, now marks the character of their sermons.—Thus, while their creed is, "*God from all eternity selected some to everlasting life, and reprobated the rest to eternal damnation,*" their preaching is, "*Whosoever will, let him come and partake of the waters of life freely*"—that Christ will save all who will come unto him, and that there is ample provision for all, and if any one is damned it is his own fault. In short, this doctrine of *works* has been urged with such peculiar force, and to such an extent, by Parson Fuller, that even the Methodists are shocked at it.

The Methodists seem to pursue the even tenor of their way; but while they and the metamorphosed Presbyterians are more or less at loggerheads with each other, both are very free in their remarks against the poor Universalists. It may not be improper, however, to remark here, that unless 'light divine' has illumined their minds, they know as little about the fundamental doctrines of Universalism, as they do about the Father and Mother of Melchisedec, or the man in the moon; at least I should suppose so, judging from their conversation.

We speak generally, there are always exceptions to general rules. Notwithstanding all the opposition, the number of Universalists is very considerable, and among them we could name some whose talents rank first in the town, and whose moral characters are truly worthy of imitation. On the whole, I think there is not a sect, which, as a body, are more respectable for morals or talents. Although they have never, as yet, formed themselves into a society by an act of incorporation, still they have regular preaching by a Mr. Miller, concerning whom, I cannot, in justice, omit making a few remarks. With that gentleman I have not the honor of a personal acquaintance, but have learned, from those in whom I can place the most implicit confidence, that he is a man of extraordinary powers of mind, of very handsome address, and of unexceptionable character; that, like St. Paul, he labors with his hands, and earns his bread by the sweat of his brow, thus fulfilling one of the first commands of God to man, "six days shalt thou labor;" while on the seventh, he preaches to the people, and is never at a loss to give a reason for his hope, with meekness and fear. The testimony of an opponent, is always valuable. It was remarked by a Methodist residing near the dwelling of Mr. Miller, that he evinced as much of the real christian character, in his daily walk and conversation, as any other man in the town. In short, he seems to have merited the name of Christian, by almost universal consent. Mr. Miller was formerly a Baptist Clergyman, and it is not till within a short time, that he renounced the horrid doctrine of John Calvin, and embraced "the faith once delivered to the saints." And thanks to that God who is able to make all men wise unto salvation, he is now a faithful, and an able advocate in the cause of truth, justice and humanity.

H.

UNIVERSAL RESTORATION.

"It appears that we may, without presumption, with the full concurrence of reason and on the clear warrant of scripture, affirm that when the Deity placed man in such circumstances as he foresaw would be attended with the production and indulgence of evil passions, he at the same time perceived, that under his direction, these passions would produce to mankind collectively, *and to every individual particularly*, a greater sum of happiness than could have existed without them. That the evil which results from the indulgence of the bad passions of mankind, *may* be made the means of eradicating them, and of training the mind to purity and benevolence, we have, as has been fully shewn, unquestionable proof in the daily events of life. This, then, which we see to be their effect with regard to some individuals at present, it is contended, will be their ultimate effect with respect to all mankind; that this is the final cause of their existence, and *that the great design of the Deity is to bring all his intelligent offspring to a state of purity and happiness.*

This doctrine reconciles every difficulty, and throws a glorious and cheering light on all the dispensations of the Deity. If it be true, every thing was planned by benevolence; every thing is guided by benevolence; every thing will terminate in benevolence, in eternal and everlasting felicity to all.

This doctine, which represents the character of the Universal Parent in the most glorious and affecting light, and is benevolent in its tendency beyond any other opinion whatever, has been opposed with much violence, by some of the best of men; and the worst have as loudly exclaimed against it. The prejudices of the good and the bad, of the pious and the profane, equally oppose it; yet there is no other truth which seems to be supported by so many *different* appearances, or by evidence derived from so many different sources. And since it throws so much light on the character and dispensations of the Deity, and is replete with such solid consolation, it may be useful to examine it somewhat at length; first considering some of the arguments which appear to favor it, and next the objections which are usually brought to oppose it.

Because this doctrine maintains that mankind will finally be restored from sin, and from the present and future misery which is its consequence, to a state of purity and happiness, and that this will ultimately be the case with respect to every individual of the human race, it is termed the doctrine of UNIVERSAL RESTORATION, which phrase, merely for the sake of brevity, we may hereafter frequently employ."

Smith on Divine Government.

EVIDENCE

Necessary to establish the doctrine of the ultimate purity and happiness of all mankind.

Some persons maintain, that the only evidence which can establish the doctrine of Universal Restoration, is the *direct* testimony of scripture. They seem to think that every proof, however solid in itself, if it cannot be adduced in the very words, or at least, if it be not borne out by the express testimony of revelation, is insufficient.

Others contend, that there is nothing in this doctrine which can prevent the application of such principles, or modes of reasoning to it, as are universally deemed just and satisfactory, when applied to other subjects; that if there be any doctrine of religion of which we can obtain a well founded assurance, by considerations which do not derive their force from the express declarations of scripture, or which are altogether independent of it, there can be no reason why the doctrine of Universal Restoration may not be one of these; and that, if this opinion can be established upon a just and solid principle, it is sufficient, whether that principle be derived from revelation, or from any other source.

If the first of these classes will be content to say, "No evidence will be sufficient to establish this opinion, unless it harmonize with scripture," there will remain no difference whatever between them; and surely it is absurd to endeavor to establish a distinction where there ought to be the greatest union. Every principle, from whatever source it be derived, if it be just, must harmonize with scripture, and all scripture, if it be genuine, and rightly understood, must harmonize with every just principle.

Evidence founded upon a just principle is satisfactory, from whatever source it is derived: the only question which can affect the solidity of the conviction it produces, is, whether it be just, not whether it have this or that origin. One single solid argument in favor of the doctrine of Universal Restoration deduced from the perfections of God, for example, is sufficient to establish its truth. One single solid argument deduced from scripture is likewise sufficient; but if a solid argument can be derived from both, the conviction produced will be more complete. In a word, if this doctrine be true, it can be established both by reason and revelation; if it be false, it can be refuted by both.

The testimony of reason adds unspeakable value to the declarations of scripture, not because established scripture wants the assistance of man's reason, but because if a doctrine be contrary to reason, we know that it is not the word of God. It betrays an ignorance of the nature of both to pay no regard to a clear deduction of reason, because it is not revelation, or to maintain that what is contrary to reason is revealed in scripture, for truth cannot be inconsistent with reason, nor can scripture and truth clash.

If it can be shewn that all the perfections of the Deity, that the nature of man, and the nature and design of punishment, are completely in favor of this doctrine, that the objections which have been urged against it, whether derived from reason or revelation, may be satisfactorily removed, that the arguments which have been supposed to establish contrary opinions are not conclusive, and that the Scriptures contain some passages which can have no meaning unless this doctrine be supposed, others which cannot be true unless it be admitted, and others which seem directly and positively to favor it—this would seem sufficient to convince a candid inquirer of its truth; because, in this case, the evidence in its favor will not only be direct and positive, but will be founded also on the most firm and solid principles, and there will be no evidence against it. It will be the object of the following pages to establish, in order, each of the above positions.

It may be proper, however, to observe, that arguments may in reality be derived from scripture, which do not at first sight appear to be so. Revelation has poured so much light upon the mind, and has led us into such a just way of reasoning concerning God, concerning his design in creation and his government of the world, that our conceptions and arguments, even when they do not appear at all to depend upon this heavenly guide, attain a degree of sublimity and truth to which they would never have arrived without it; and we often appear to be following the deductions of our own understanding, when in reality we are only repeating in other words, and with other associations, the declarations of scripture. Why, without any direct or apparent dependance upon revelation, are we enabled to form such pure and exalted conceptions of the Supreme Being, as were totally unknown to the great sages of antiquity? It is because revelation has furnished us with the light which has conducted us to these noble and just conclusions.—*Smith on Divine Government.*

FROM THE PIONEER AND VISITOR.

FAITH AND UNBELIEF.

He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him. John iii, 36.

Such has been the education of the christian community, that when they read a passage of Scripture on the subject of punishment, salvation or eternal life, they refer it to the future world, and consider it expressive of an unalterable condition in that state. In consequence of this, many parts of the Bible, which have an important bearing on the interests and duties of life, are rendered useless; for as they are applied they have no relation to the present world. Other parts are made contradictory, mysterious and absurd; while others are made to attach principles to God and his Government, which would be unworthy, yea, the disgrace of any man on earth.

For instance: when the Bible speaks of punishment, and threatens sinners with a full recompense for their transgressions, many suppose the threatening has no relation to this life; but expresses their miserable and unalterable state in the eternal world. Thus the salutary influence of the threatnings is lost, and punishment is looked upon, not as the chastisements of a kind father, who ardently desires the welfare of his children: but as the outpourings of the indignation of an angry, vindictive Sovereign. Again: when the bible speaks of salvation, people, instead of considering it as the reconciliation of the mind to God, the washing of regeneration, the renewing of the Holy Spirit, and a purification unto good works, look upon it as a preservative from an infinitely awful doom, and a safeguard against the fury of an incensed God. Again: when the bible speaks of eternal life, people, instead of considering it as the great gift of God, given us in Christ Jesus before the world began; instead of considering it as that which comes through faith and an acquaintance with our Creator; and instead of considering it as that which christians enjoy on earth, look upon it as endless happiness, given for obedience and faith in time.

These false views have led many to suppose, that the text refers to the future state; and teaches that those, who believe at death, shall be endlessly happy; while those who do not, shall be endlessly miserable. But a few remarks will show the incorrectness of this idea, and how the text is to be understood. "He that believeth on the Son *hath* everlasting life.' Now, we cannot conceive what should lead any to conclude, that this life can be enjoyed only in the future world; for it says *hath* everlasting life, not shall have in eternity. We may say the same of the latter clause; and he that believeth not shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him;" that is, he cannot see life in unbelief; and while he remains in that state, he will remain under the displeasure of God. For instance, suppose a person, on hearing Jesus preached, should reject him, and call him an impostor, and his doctrine a cunningly devised fable; he would be damned; the great truth he rejects would condemn him; and in that state he could not see life, and the wrath of God would abide on him. But if, after reflection, he should believe, he would then be freed from his condemnation, and from the Divine wrath, and then he could see life. Therefore, the text means, that to enjoy life, we must exercise a lively faith in the Messiah, and that while we remain destitute of faith, we shall remain in a state of condemnation.

It is synonymous with those passages which say, "He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned." I am aware that this last text is thought to give support to the doctrine of endless misery, because it says, *shall be damned;* but it should be remembered, that the word damned is the same in the original as the word condemned, and simply expresses the consequence of unbelief, without any regard to duration. Perhaps it will be said, the verb is in the future tense, and therefore, the life will be given in the coming world, as a reward for obedience in this. The incorrectness of this will be manifest, when we consider that the text under consideration expresses the effects which would follow the preaching of the gospel. In the verse preceding this, our Savior said, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature;" and in this he expressed the effects which would follow. Those who believed, would enjoy life, and those who did not, would be damned; that is, they would experience the opposite of what the true christian would enjoy. And as the preaching was then future, he must, of necessity, use the future tense. Therefore, he said, he that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved. When? the question may be asked. Why, when he believes. But he that believeth not shall be damned. When? Why, when he rejects the truth. When the inspired writers were speaking of the present time, as in the text, they said, "hath everlasting life," which shows, that the life would be enjoyed when the faith was exercised —And had the Apostles, when engaged in preaching, been questioned respecting the effects of their doctrine, they would have said, those who believe are saved; they enjoy life; and they pass from condemnation. Thus the Apostle said, we who have believed, do enter into rest. Enough has been said to show, that the life is enjoyed, when faith is exercised. This admitted, and the text is no argument in favor of endless misery, because it only teaches that unbelievers will not see life, and not that all men will never become believers. We have always wondered that our opposers in religion, did not see their great mistake in quoting this passage against our views. We as firmly believe, as any can, that none can see life in unbelief. This is not the dividing line between us and other sects. The difference is, we believe all men will eventually believe, and, therefore, see life; they believe some will not believe, and, therefore, cannot see life; Hence the text only proves what we with all christians, believe.

O. A. S.

ATHEISTS.

They abhor the author of their being. He never presents himself to their thoughts but to menace and alarm them. They cannot strike the sun out of the heavens, but they are able to raise a smouldering smoke that obscures him from their eyes. BURKE.

CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

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PUBLIC WORSHIP.

If public worship is enjoined in the sacred Scriptures as an important duty, and if it is strongly recommended us by the several advantages, especially the frequent opportunities for moral instruction and improvement which it affords, a consideration of the pure and holy intellectual enjoyment that may be found in it, certainly ought not to be neglected. There is something peculiarly striking in the idea of a whole community, leaving their usual avocations, the labors, and cares, and vexations of life, and assembling with devotional hearts in "the house of prayer," to adore the great Author of their existence, and the Giver of every good and perfect gift. We envy not the man his sensibilities, who can contemplate such a scene with feelings of aversion or indifference. His heart must be cold indeed, who can witness without emotion the old and the young, the rich and the poor, coming together with "the sacrifice of thanksgiving and the voice of praise" before the God and Father of Mankind. But his must be colder still, who can mingle in the throng and feel none of the higher aspirations of his nature, and wish not for communion with the great Spirit of the Universe. The pleasure derived from pure devotion, indeed from all the services of public worship, is of a peculiar kind and partakes more of heaven than of earth. It is high and spiritual. To be enjoyed once, is only to excite desire to enjoy it again, and he who experiences it oftenest will appreciate it best.

It cannot be doubted, however, that in the present disunited state of the Christian Church, the diversity of opinion which exists as well in regard to forms as doctrines, must necessarily give individuals strong preferences for public worship in particular congregations, where their own sentiments are received and inculcated, and to whose forms education or habit may have attached them. Nor can it be doubted, that our enjoyment in public worship is heightened by this communion in sentiment and feeling with our fellow men. The Roman Catholic goes not to the Protestant Church to worship God. The Episcopalian feels not an equal freedom and enjoys not an equal pleasure in a congregation of Presbyterians. The Presbyterian mingles not with the Methodist. And the Methodist would never dream of worshiping his Creator among the silent Friends. It must be confessed that forms of worship in all these cases, make half of the dividing line between denominations, and should not doctrines be taken into equal consideration? Episcopalians, Presbyterians and Methodists, differ it is true, but their differences are not *essential*. They with uncommon charity acknowledge each other *Evangelical* Christians, and yet they cannot or will not worship together. What shall we say then of those, who like ourselves, differ essentially from them all? They worship a *Trinity* in a *Unity*, we the One only true and living God; —they worship a God of "unextinguishable wrath and vengeance," we a God who is Love, whose "anger endureth not forever;"—they present themselves before him in the name of Jesus who is "very God" the partial Savior of men, we in the name of Jesus the "Son of God," the blessed Mediator, and "the Savior of the world." We do not wish to conceal the fact that we differ from them. If they are Gospel or Evangelical Christians, we confess we are not. We acknowledge that we know nothing of the gospel of Jesus Christ, if it teaches that Jesus Christ who *died* on Calvary was the eternal and *immortal* God, and that he died to appease his own wrath, and reconcile himself to his erring creature, man.

We take it for granted that no conscientious and reflecting Unitarian Universalist can enjoy public worship, at least to the highest degree, in a congregation, whose prayers and instructions are all formed in accordance with the popular Trinitarian and limited plan. Every service will necessarily call upon him to assent to doctrines, in his judgment, repugnant to the clearest dictates of "the word and the testimony," or sacrifice on his unbelief his eternal interests and well-being. He must be looked upon even by those with whom he attempts to worship, as a heretic pursuing his way down to an endless hell. And what is infinitely worse than the opinion of his fellow-men, his own conscience will chide him for sacrificing his happiness and his self-respect, at the shrine of popular opinion. S.

INFLUENCE OF MODERN REVIVALS.

It seems to be the opinion of those most ardently engaged in the scenes of excitement, called Revivals, that they offer subjects of consideration particularly discouraging to liberal christians. Could we believe our limitarian friends we should suppose ourselves almost in despair. Revivals, for the year past, have been so common through our country, and attended with such unusual success that some even imagine the millenium is at hand, at least, that the day is not far distant, when their dogmas will be received as gospel truth by almost all "from the rising of the sun to the going down thereof." We feel perfectly willing that they should indulge, if they can, such dear dreams of coming glory. For ourselves, we have hitherto experienced no apprehensions of the overthrow of the sentiments which it is our honor and happiness to advocate. Indeed, instead of finding cause to despond in the multiplied Revivals which are overspreading our country, if it was possible for us to disregard the misery, the insanity, the suicide, and murder, which have followed in their train, we must rejoice, because we believe no measure has ever been adopted, by the popular religious denominations, so admirably calculated to destroy themselves, by presenting in a clear light the natural and direct tendency of their doctrines. We profess no spirit of prophecy, and it is hardly necessary to foretell that the present unnatural excitements will be succeeded by a corresponding depression and apathy. We have seen too much of Revivals to believe them productive of great, immediate good, and altogether too much not to know that they do great ultimate injury. They are seldom if ever of that charitable spirit which the religion of Jesus demands. They represent the duties of religion as consisting in something widely different from "visiting the fatherless and widows in their afflictions," or from "dealing justly, loving mercy, and walking humbly with God." They set up false criterions of christian character. They are sustained by perversions or false interpretations of the Divine Oracles. And their influence, we believe, deleterious to the interests of true religion. That christian, of whatever name, or however sound his faith and correct his life, who will not acknowledge a revival scene of noise and impudence and folly, the especial work of the Holy Spirit, and who will not give his countenance to all the new-fangled mechanical means and measures for making proselytes, is denounced as "a cold formalist," and associated with the drunkard and the profane. And this is called Religion: and he who imbibes this spirit, and will act in it, is religious. That system which is best calculated to frighten the weak and timid, is the nearest perfection, and that minister, who can best work upon the passions of his auditors, is the greatest minister. The soundness of a faith is to be tested, not by the "good works" it produces, but by the proselytes it makes. On this principle how vastly superior does Mahomet appear to Christ! Yet at this very moment, if we are not mistaken, the old school and new school Presbyterians are contending for preference on this principle, and the Presbyterians and the Methodists are struggling for mastery in "the great work of the Lord," the work of making proselytes to their individual systems.

As we before remarked, we should rejoice in the success of Modern Revivals, if we could overlook the immediate evils by which they are attended. And even now we feel confident they will do good. The public will not slumber forever over this subject, and we are glad that the evil is likely to remedy itself. S.

ANOTHER LABORER.

We take pleasure in announcing to our readers, and friends generally, the determination of Br. Shaler J. Hillyer of this city, to devote his time and talents to the promulgation of "the glorious gospel of the blessed God." Br. Hillyer was bred "in the straitest sect," a New-England Calvinist. For several years, however, he has been a firm and unwavering believer and friend of "the faith once delivered to the saints," and has well employed his leisure hours in forming an acquaintance with the Scriptures which have "made him wise unto salvation." He brings to the aid of our common cause a mind disciplined by study and matured by reflection, and a character that is above even suspicion. Exposed as we are to the tongue of malicious falsehood and slander, this last circumstance is a matter of especial importance. With the character of Br. Hillyer's writings our readers have perhaps, become acquainted in several articles over his initials that have appeared in the "Christian Messenger." He has preached several times in this vicinity, and with universal acceptation, and from a single opportunity we have enjoyed

of listening to his message of grace, we cannot but regard him as "a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." And wherever he may be called to labor in the vineyard of his Master, we are confident, that in all things he will show himself "a pattern of good works; in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say." S.

"WHO OPPOSE PROTRACTED MEETINGS?"

On another page will be found an article with this heading, and signed AMICUS. It first appeared in the Christian Secretary, but we copy it from our neighbor, the New-York Evangelist, which is well known to be "Devoted to Revivals and doctrinal discussions." We present it to our readers for two reasons. First, we wish to give them a specimen of the genuine spirit of 'revivals.' All who cannot pronounce the *Shibboleth* of "protracted meetings," are very charitably placed by these revival christians among the most debased and reckless of the community—they are associated with *profane swearers and drunkards!* "Now, brethren, you see who they are that oppose protracted meetings, and if you oppose them you know your company." And this is the all prevailing *argument* which is to convince christians that protracted meetings and all the new schemes for getting up Revivals are sanctioned by the word of God and accompanied by wonderful manifestations of the Holy Ghost. Really, we know not whether we should most pity their ignorance or despise their shameless effrontery. But we have heard of those before now who could say, "stand by thyself; come not near ME, for I am HOLIER than thou." In the second place, we wish our readers to know in what estimation they are held, and with what charity they and their opinions are treated, by these spiritually minded christians. Universalism is a most licentious doctrine. The general character of those who believe it is degraded. Its advocates and professors are *drunkards* and *profane swearers*—they *never pray* in their families, or in secret. They are "enemies of religion, and only wish to injure Jesus Christ." Such is the treatment Universalists and Universalism receives from—*christians.*

We know nothing of *Amicus*, or the *Christian Secretary*, but we have a word to say to the Rev. Joshua Leavitt, editor of the New-York Evangelist, who seems to approve of the views, (at least of the dissemination of them) contained in the article alluded to. We would, if possible, attribute this retail of popular scandal to ignorance. We would acquit Br. Leavitt of intentional wrong in this case, could we suppose him so far deluded as to place the least confidence in the statements relative to Universalists, which *Amicus* has made. But we cannot. We cannot but think that Br. Leavitt *did know* that the impression this article was calculated to give was FALSE, and knowing it, he lent the influence of his name and the columns of his paper to spread the *falsehood*. He will not plead *ignorance*, he DARES not attempt to sustain the base charges there made, by an appeal to the facts. We leave him to settle the account with his conscience (if he has any) and his God.

But granting all there asserted with regard to Universalists, we should think our Limitarian friends wise enough to know, that "they who live in glass houses ought not to throw stones." Are there no drunkards among Limitarians? None even among the Presbyterians? Let facts, in the recollection of every one, answer. We could tell of some, not of the "vulgar herd" whose influence extends only through their own household, not of those who are unknown and unacknowledged as members of any sect, but of some among the *teachers* in Israel, who were regarded as the lights and ornaments of their church, who were followed and flattered as the great examples of godliness and virtue, and who yet, in the midst of their glory, *died* SOTS. We could tell of some of the same class of persons who have disgraced themselves and their profession by inebriation, not a hundred miles from New-York, and within the last year. We could mention the notorious case of the Rev. Samuel Arnold, of Ossipee, N. H. who, in a course of wickedness for months, has been sustained by his clerical brethren, until he was detected at a "protracted meeting," in illicit intercourse with a female subject of 'revival.' But we forbear. We despise the spirit of retaliation, and have only mentioned these circumstances to remind Br. Leavitt and his coadjutors in slander, that while such beams are in their own eyes, they need not volunteer their services to pluck the mote from their neighbors'. Such cases prove not that Limitarian doctrines are false, nor that Limitarians, as a body, are intemperate and wicked men; and he must be either ignorant or base who could introduce them for such a purpose. The remark is equally applicable to Universalism and Universalists.

With respect to *swearing*, we may remark, that it belongs to Limitarians exclusively, and whenever you hear a man using profane language you may be assured he was bred in a Limitarian school. A Universalist has no idea of "God's damning souls to hell!!" an expression which evidently had its origin in the sacred but abused desk, and from its accordance with the worst passions of human nature, has now become the common curse on the tongue of every wicked and reckless man. The pitiful story with which 'Amicus' closes his tirade of abuse, is worthy of the cause it was introduced to subserve—and of that cause only. The man deserves commisseration who can believe it. But even should we grant it to be true, it would only discover one trait in the poor ignorant Universalist's character, for which we fear neither 'Amicus' nor those who have given publicity and countenance to his article, will ever be accused—an unwavering determination, even at the expense of popularity and interest, to speak the TRUTH. S.

We acknowledge the receipt of a letter from Br. A. C. Thomas, of Philadelphia, in relation, among other subjects, to the Pamphlet, "*Triumph of Truth.*" We have had frequent calls for them, both in the city and from the country, and are disposed to lend our aid in their distribution, in accordance with the *intention* of their publication. He will therefore please forward us 200 of them, by the earliest convenient opportunity, and we will account for them when, and in such manner, as he may direct. We take the liberty also of giving the following extract from his letter on another subject. We are pleased with his frankness in condemning clerical influence in our colleges, (though we would not approve of *proscription* in any case;) and we most sincerely hope our own clergy may be long preserved from that disposition to *rule* and *dictate*, so common to the clerical character. P.

"One clause of the Will of the late Stephen Girard of this city has created considerable excitement. He has left two millions of dollars, in trust, for the establishment of a college for poor white male orphan children; and has emphatically required and enjoined, that no ecclesiastic, missionary, or minister of any sect whatever, shall have any thing to do with the concern. Nay, they shall not be permitted even so much as to visit the institution! I am heartily glad that the clergy will exercise no influence over at least *one* college in the land. For, although I am a clergyman, I am wholly opposed to the practice, so generally prevalent, of allowing to ministers of religion the privilege of infusing sectarian dogmas into the minds of the rising generation—especially in Colleges, Acadamies, &c. either supported by the public funds, or established and endowed by private individuals for the benefit of the public. Let sound and wholesome morals be inculcated—but let not clerical influence cause, in the minds of the young, a prejudgment of subjects that should alone be canvassed by matured reason."

REV. ALFRED V. BASSETT.

We noticed in our last, says the Trumpet of January 7th, the very sudden death of Rev. Alfred V. Bassett, Pastor of the Universalist Society in Dedham, Mass. The following account of his death is from the Dedham Advocate, and may be relied on as correct:—

"DREADFUL DEATH.—A more melancholy instance of suicide probably never occurred in this region, than that which it is now our painful duty to record. The Rev. Alfred V. Bassett, Pastor of the Universalist Society in this town, committed suicide on Monday night last, by cutting his throat with a razor! The following particulars, as we learn from a friend of the deceased, are substantially correct. Mr. Bassett had been unwell several days with the prevailing influenza, and complained of a pain in his head, from which it is supposed that a fever on his brain produced that derangement of mind which caused him to commit the fatal deed. After retiring on Monday night, he arose and extinguished the light, which had been left burning in consequence of his illness. The individual who lodged with him, about 11 o'clock, being aroused by the struggles and groans of the deceased, he hastened to alarm the family, and the poor man was found lying on the floor, struggling amid the agonies which thirty minutes after terminated in death. It appeared that he had drawn the razor on both sides of the throat, cutting very deeply on the left side. Mr. Bassett was 25 years of age, a native of Atkinson, N. H. and had been settled in this town two years. He was a young man of respectable talents, and by his amiable manners and kind disposition, had won the esteem of many, who are now called to unite with his relatives and friends in mourning his untimely exit."

FOR THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

"TO ERR IS HUMAN."

There is probably no truth more perfectly self-evident, than is the motto heading this article. In our intercourse with society, we are frequently the victims of delusion, mistake, and misrepresentation. We blunder through life, erring and deceived. Bewildered and lost in the intricate mazes of one labyrinth after another, we have scarce time to realize that we have been mistaken, ere, in the dim twilight of that rayless incertitude that shrouds our limited perceptions, we stumble on another and another error. Thus life glides away, leaving little, but the beacons erected by our folly and ignorance, as warnings to those, who after us, shall tread the devious path vacated by their predecessors.

These remarks apply but too truly to every thing with which man is concerned in this world of instability and vicissitude. In the joyous prospects of buoyant youth; in the sober deliberations of ripened manhood; in the solemn gravity and matured wisdom of three score years and ten, enlightened as it may be by much experience, guarded by a recollection of former deviations, and cautioned by a thousand remembrances of past mistakes, man goes down to the grave, the lacerated victim of imposture and deception. And it is a lamentable truth, that on the subject of Religion, this imposture and deception have been the most extensive, and by consequence, the most deleterious in their operation.

Spreading like a fretting leprosy, its perni-

cious influence pervades the whole intellectual man, prostrates all that is noble in the mind, depraves the heart, corrupts the moral principles, and introduces anarchy and misrule, strife and evil, where only order and harmony, conciliation and beatitude, should be found, transforming the life giving panacea of peace on earth and good will to men, into the bitter waters of bigotry and intolerance, persecution of heretics, and proscription for opinions. Of all the errors of which poor deluded man has ever been the unfortunate subject, this, doubtless, is the most flagrant, the most wicked, the most deadly. 'Tis like the hoar frost of winter, blighting with its withering breath, the luxuriant foliage and gay verdure of spring. It dries up the milk of human kindness, chills the kindlier sensibilities of our nature, petrifies the heart, and transforms the innocent harmlessness of the lamb into the relentless ferocity of the tiger.

Of all errors, religious errors are the most to be feared. Of all religious errors, an assumption of authority over the faith and opinions of others, is the most fatal, the most diametrically opposed to the spirit of Christianity, the institutions of our country, and the inherent and unalienable rights of all men; and is calculated in the most direct manner, to bring religion into contempt, and make of the most intelligent portion of the community, sceptics and atheists. Hence hundreds have, in disgust with this hydra headed monster, discarded all religion, turned with loathing and abhorrence from every thing connected with it, and settled in the gross, tangible darkness of infidelity. They neither believe nor disbelieve—universal scepticism broods in its midnight gloom over their understanding, and like a paralyzing incubus fetters every faculty of their minds. They doubt every thing—there may be a God and there may not; man may be the heir of immortality, or he may be the ephemeral insect of a day, destined by blind chance, or equally unintelligent nature, to flutter in the alternate sunshine and shade of his present existence, and then sink down to perpetual oblivion. They know not, they care not. Religion presents itself to them in the loathsome habiliments of persecution and bigotry, and they hate every thing that has heretofore borne the appellation, and they are determined to hate on. They know no form of it but that which is detestable, and they will give themselves no trouble to inquire whether there be any other.

Now we beg leave to ask, Do not such persons err? Does it follow, because false religion has been productive of such overwhelming mischief, that there is nothing true or good that bears the name? Surely these very liberal minded inquirers would do well to pause and ask themselves, whether it may not be possible for even them to err in this matter?

Are there any hopes so brilliant as is the fascinating prospect of a glorious and blissful immortality. Can there be found among the moral precepts of the sages of antiquity a code of ethics more clear, comprehensive, and perfect, than is comprised in that brief injunction, "Do to others as ye would they should do to you." Is there any truth so consoling, so well calculated to cheer amidst the gloom that not unfrequently broods over our pilgrimage of mortality, as is the assurance, that we have a Father, whose watchful eye will never sleep, and who designs, in the dispensation of the fulness of times, to reconcile all things to himself, and restore to purity and blessedness, every unfortunate wanderer, and every abandoned prodigal?

What has the sceptic to give us in exchange for these joyous and delightful prospects? What boon does he offer us in return for them? the petrifying frost, the dreamless slumber of annihilation—the eternal darkness of the grave—the perpetual night of everlasting oblivion.

We grant that to err is human, but should all our hope and all our fears be prisoned in life's narrow bound, should our breathings after immortality be the mere figment of a distempered imagination, the illusion is delightful, and the disappointment can never be realized. But on this subject we are satisfied, that our expectations are founded on a rock—the rock of ages, the sure promise of that God who made heaven and earth, and all things that are therein. And we invite the unbeliever to "Come and see" the evidence upon which the superstructure of our faith is built. Let him enter with us the broad field of free inquiry in this matter.

Let him, however, carefully guard himself, against that most flagrant error, into which his brethren are so prone to fall. Let him never prevail on himself to believe, that Universalism is a pioneer to Atheism, or a mantle for profligacy, or that preachers of this denomination are "pretty good atheists." For he may assure himself that the man who expects beneath this all protecting shade, to recline in the lap of vice, and shelter the native loathsomeness of his corrupt principles from public odium, will verify in his experience the truth of our text. Universalism is neither a stepping stone to infidelity, nor a cloak for wickedness. Sin and irreligion are as diametrically opposed to the faith of Universalists as darkness is opposed to light, and the individual who calculates on finding in it encouragement for the one, or support to the other, spends his strength for nought, and his labor for that which will never satisfy him. And he who expects, in the public lectures of this class of clergymen, to sit under the droppings of Owenism, sows the wind of delusion, and he will reap the whirlwind of disappointment. R. S****.

FOR THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD.

The sovereignty of God, founded in infinite unchangeable *love*, is a subject upon which the intelligent, though humble christian delights to dwell. *Goodness* to prompt, *wisdom* to devise, and *power* to execute, are attributes which the consistent Theologian ascribes to his God in an infinite degree. To contemplate his *power*, insulated from his wisdom and benevolence, can cause us to tremble, but not to adore. And to meditate upon his *goodness*, while we believe the creature has the power of baffling the gracious designs of the Supreme, can cause in our bosoms sensations of awful uncertainty, but it can never enable us to repose with sweet confidence in his wisdom and power. Therefore, that system of Theology which does not acknowledge the infinite intelligence, the boundless and impartial love, and the almighty power of Jehovah, is based upon promises radically wrong.

God by the prophet Isaiah hath said: "Remember the former things of old; for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me; declaring the *end* from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, my *counsel shall* stand, and I *will* do *all* my pleasure." "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, surely as I have *thought*, so shall it come to pass; and as I have *purposed*, so shall it stand." "For the Lord of hosts hath *purposed*, and who shall disannul it? And his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?" In Daniel it is said, "he doeth according to his *will*, in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him what doest thou?" And the apostle Paul says, he "worketh *all* things after the counsel of his *own* will." In the presence of this testimony, we will venture to say that whatever God has willed, purposed or designed, he *will* accomplish.

Another important idea now presents itself. What is God's *will?* What is his *pleasure?* If he disclosed to his creature man, his *will*, through the volume of inspiration, it is in our power to learn what that will is. Paul to his beloved Timothy says, "I exhort, therefore, that first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for *all* men; for kings, and for all that are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all goodliness and honesty. For this is *good* and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who *will* have *all* men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." Again he says to the Ephesians, "Having made known unto us the mystery of his *will*, according to his good *pleasure*, which he hath *purposed* in himself, that in the dispensation of the fulness of times, he might gather together in one, *all* things in Christ both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him."

Reader, grasp in your mind the two preceding ideas, viz. the *sovereignty* and unlimited *grace* of God, and then pause, ponder, and reflect. If it is his *will* to save *all* men, and if he worketh *all* things after the counsel of his *own* will, how many will be eternally lost? Again, if it is his *purpose* and *pleasure*, to gather together in one, *all* things in Christ, and if his counsel *shall* stand, and if he *will* do *all* his *pleasure*, is it not certain that all men will be made holy and happy through Christ?

Our Calvinistic brethren will take us by the hand, and go on in harmony with us as long as we dwell upon the sovereignty of God; but the moment we introduce the impartiality of his grace, and talk about his will in the salvation of all, he stops short and refuses to go with us farther. We then fall in company with our Arminian brother, and travel on hand in hand with him as long as we converse upon the universality of God's grace and goodness; but when we speak of his working all things after the counsel of his *own* will and of his doing *all* his *pleasure*, we leave *him* behind.

The Calvinist cannot become a convert to Arminianism, without falling into Universalism, unless his faith relinquishes its grasp on the power and wisdom of Deity. Neither can the Arminian embrace Calvinism without sliding into Universalism, unless he narrows down his conceptions of God's love and goodness. For the latter frankly acknowledges, that God *wills* the salvation of *all* men; while the former, as frankly declares that whatever he *wills* or designs, he *will* execute. If these two great denominations could become converts to each other's sentiments, still retaining in their creeds all worth preserving, Universalism would be the general belief.

S. J. H.

LETTERS AND REMITTANCES,

Received at this office, ending January 11th.

Post master, Bailey's Mills, Flor.; P. Master, Rahway, N. J. 2 letters; Postmaster, Huntington, L. I. $1, for J. S. B.; S. C. J. Hightstown, N. J. $2; Rev. L. L. S. Le Roy, N. Y.; C. P. P. Durham, N. Y.; Rev. A. C. T. Philadelphia.

MARRIED,

In this city, by Aldrman Stevens, Mr. Charles M. Olcott and Miss Maria C. daughter of Stephen Underhill.

In Hightstown, N. J. on the 5th inst. by Rev. T. J. Sawyer, Mr. Enoch Mount, of Upper Freehold, and Miss Catharine Johnes, daughter of Col. Samuel C. Johnes, of Hightstown.

DIED,

In this city, on Sunday morning last, Mrs. Hannah Robinson, wife of Mr. Zelotes Robinson, late of Danbury, Conn. aged 73.

NOTICE.

"The Ladies' Dorcas Society," will meet on Wednesday next at Mrs. Osborn's, No. 438 Grand-street, at 2 o'clock, P. M.

FOR THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

TIME'S CHANGES.

I placed a young and tender flower
Just blooming, in the sun:
Alas, I found in one short hour
A chilling blast had come,
And o'er each slender tendril blew
A withering blight of air,
Heedless of the lament it drew
From her who left it there.

I saw a fair majestic bark
Glide smoothly o'er the stream,
As lightly, as the cheerful lark
In morning's radiant beam;
When lo! a sudden storm arose;
Each shivering sail was riven—
And in the frightful whirlpool's close
The shatter'd wreck was driven.

I saw a babe, a lovely one,
Hang on its mother's breast;
The happy parent gazed upon
Its calm unbroken rest:
Ev'en then, beneath its placid brow,
Death's icy hand was laid,
Which check'd the healthful current's flow
Long ere the evening shade.

I saw a fond and blissful pair
Gaily begin life's morn;
Young love had scatter'd roses there,
Which held no rankling thorn:
The slow insidious tempter cast
A mildew o'er the soul—
Love! Virtue! thy brief reign was past,
Lost in the mad'ning bowl.

Oh! I have wept o'er scenes like these,
In deep and anguish'd feeling;
When a "still small voice," born on the breeze,
Came, as music gently stealing—
"Weep not that earthly joys must die,
A purer bliss is given;
Oh raise thy sadden'd thoughts on high,
Thy heart's trust place on Heaven."

S. A. M.

ETERNITY OF GOD.—Greenwood.

We receive such repeated intimations of decay in the world through which we are passing; decline and change and loss, follow decline and change and loss in such rapid succession, that we can almost catch the sound of universal wasting, and hear the work of desolation going on busily around us. "The mountain, falling, cometh to nought, and the rock is removed out of his place. The waters wear the stones, the things which grow out of the dust of the earth are washed away, and the hope of man is destroyed." Conscious of our own instability, we look about for something to rest on, but we look in vain. The heavens and the earth had a beginning, and they will have an end. The face of the world is changing daily and hourly. All animated things grow old and die. The rocks crumble, the trees fall, the leaves fade, and the grass withers. The clouds are flying, and the waters are flowing away from us.

The firmest works of man, too, are gradually giving way; the ivy clings to the mouldering tower, the brier hangs out from the shattered window, and the wall-flower springs from the disjointed stones. The founders of these perishable works have shared the same fate long ago. If we look back to the days of our ancestors, to the men as well as the dwellings of former times, they become immediately associated in our imaginations, and only make the feelings of instability stronger and deeper than before. In the spacious domes, which once held our fathers, the serpent hisses, and the wild bird screams. The halls, which once were crowded with all that taste, and science, and labor could procure, which resounded with melody, and were lighted up with beauty, are buried by their own ruins, mocked by their own desolation. The voice of merriment, and of wailing, the steps of the busy and the idle, have ceased in the deserted courts, and the weeds choke the entrances, and the long grass waves upon the hearthstone. The works of art, the forming hand, the tombs, the very ashes they contained, are all gone.

While we thus walk among the ruins of the past, a sad feeling of insecurity comes over us; and that feeling is by no means diminished when we arrive at home. If we turn to our friends, we can hardly speak to them before they bid us farewell. We see them for a few moments, and in a few moments more their countenances are changed, and they are sent away. It matters not how near and dear they are. The ties which bind us together are never too close to be parted, or too strong to be broken. Tears were never known to move the king of terrors, neither is it enough that we are compelled to surrender one, or two, or many of those we love; for though the price is so great, we buy no favor with it, and our hold on those who remain is as slight as ever. The shadows all elude our grasp, and follow one another down the valley. We gain no confidence, then, no feeling of security, by turning to our contemporaries and kindred. We know that the forms, which are breathing around us, are as short-lived as those were, which have been dust for centuries. The sensation of vanity, uncertainty, and ruin, is equally strong, whether we muse on what has long been prostrate, or gaze on what is falling now, or will fall so soon.

If every thing which comes under our notice has endured for so short a time, and in so short a time will be no more, we cannot say that we receive the least assurance by thinking on ourselves. When they, on whose fate we have been meditating, were engaged in the active scenes of life, as full of health and hope as we are now, what were we? We had no knowledge, no consciousness, no being; there was not a single thing in the wide universe which knew us. And after the same interval shall have elapsed, which now divides their days from ours, what shall we be? What they are now. When a few more friends have left, a few more hopes deceived, and a few more changes mocked us, "we shall be brought to the grave, and shall remain in the tomb: the clods of the valley shall be sweet unto us, and every man shall draw after us, as there are innumerable before us." All power will have forsaken the strongest, and the loftiest will be laid low, and every eye will be closed, and every voice hushed, and every heart will have ceased its beating. And when we have gone ourselves, even our memories will not stay behind us long. A few of the near and dear will bear our likeness in their bosom, till they too have arrived at the end of their journey, and entered the dark dwelling of unconsciousness. In the thoughts of others we shall live only till the last sound of the bell, which informs them of our departure, has ceased to vibrate in their ears. A stone, perhaps, may tell some wanderer where we lie, when we came here, and when we went away; but even that will soon refuse to bear us record: "time's effacing fingers" will be busy on its surface, and at length will wear it smooth; and then the stone itself will sink or crumble, and the wanderer of another age will pass, without a single call upon his sympathy, over our unheeded graves.

Is there nothing to counteract the sinking of the heart, which must be the effect of observations like these? Is there no substance among all these shadows? If all who live and breathe around us are the creatures of yesterday, and destined to see destruction to-morrow; if the same condition is our own, and the same sentence is written against us; if the solid forms of inanimate nature and laborious art are fading and falling; if we look in vain for durability to the very roots of mountains, where shall we return, and on what shall we rely? Can no support be offered? can no source of confidence be named? Oh yes! there is one Being, to whom we can look with a perfect conviction of finding that security, which nothing about us can give, and which nothing about us can take away. To this Being we can lift up our souls, and on him we may rest them, exclaiming in the language of the monarch of Israel, "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hast formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting thou art God. Of old hast thou laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou shalt endure; yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment, as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed; but thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end."

The eternity of God is a subject of contemplation, which, at the same time that it overwhelms us with astonishment and awe, affords us an immoveable ground of confidence in the midst of a changing world. All things which surround us, all these dying, mouldering inhabitants of time, must have had a Creator, for the plain reason, that they could not have created themselves. And their Creator must have existed from all eternity, for the plain reason, that the first cause must necessarily be uncaused. As we cannot suppose a beginning without a cause of existence, that which is the cause of all existence must be self-existent, and could have had no beginning. And, as it had no beginning, so also, as it is beyond the reach of all influence and control, as it is independent and Almighty, it will have no end.

Here then is a support, which will never fail; here is a foundation, which can never be moved—the everlasting Creator of countless worlds, "the high and lofty One, that inhabiteth eternity." What a sublime conception! *He inhabits eternity*, occupies this inconceivable duration, pervades and fills throughout this boundless dwelling. Ages on ages before even the dust of which we are formed was created, he had existed in infinite majesty, and ages on ages will roll away, after we have all returned to the dust whence we were taken, and still he will exist in infinite majesty, living in the eternity of his own nature, reigning in the plenitude of his own Omnipotence, forever sending forth the word, which forms, supports and governs, all things, commanding new-created light to shine on new-created worlds, and raising up new-created generations to inhabit them.

The contemplation of these glorious attributes of God is fitted to excite in our minds the most animating and consoling reflections. Standing, as we are, amid the ruins of time, and the wrecks of mortality, where every thing about us is created and dependent, proceeding from nothing, and hastening to destruction, we rejoice that something is presented to our view, which has stood from everlasting, and will remain forever. When we have looked on the pleasures of life, and they have vanished away; when we have looked on the works of nature, and perceived that they were changing; on the monuments of art, and seen that they would not stand; on our friends, and they have fled, while we were gazing; on ourselves, and felt that we were as fleeting as they; when we have looked on every object to which we could turn our anxious eyes, and they have all told us that they could give us no hope nor support, because they were so feeble themselves—we can look to the throne of God: change and decay have never reached that; the revolution of ages has never moved it; the waves of an eternity have been rushing past it, but it has remained unshaken; the waves of another eternity are rushing toward it, but it is fixed, and can never be disturbed.

And blessed be God, who has assured us, by a revelation from himself, that the throne of eternity is likewise a throne of mercy and love; who has permitted and invited us to repose ourselves and our hopes on that which alone is everlasting and unchangeable. We shall shortly finish our allotted time on earth, even if it should be unusually prolonged. We shall leave behind us all which is now familiar and beloved, and a world of other days and other men will be entirely ignorant that we once lived. But the same unalterable Being will still preside over the universe, through all its changes, and from his remembrance we shall never be blotted. We can never be where he is not, nor where he sees and loves and upholds us not. He is our Father and our God forever. He takes us from earth that he may lead us to heaven, that he may refine our nature from all its principles of corruption, share with us his own immortality, admit us to his everlasting habitation, and crown us with his eternity.

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